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SMY
SALT TWO
SESSION I
A-92

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION
U.S. SALT DELEGATION
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

DATE: December 15, 1972

TIME: 11.40 - 12.30

PLACE: US Mission Geneva

SUBJECT:

PARTICIPANTS: US

USSR

Mr. Nitze

Dr. Brown

Academician Shchukin

Brown asked Shchukin whether he could clarify a question on the subject of their proposal with respect to ballistic missiles carried by aircraft. Did they have in mind ballistic missiles of a range comparable to that of ICBMs or did they have in mind those of a shorter range whose purpose was that of penetrating terminal defenses? Shchukin replied that they did not have in mind the short range variety. However, they did mean to include those with a range comparable to that of the longer range cruise missiles, which they had referred to in their proposal. Shchukin said that unless there were a ban on ballistic missiles of ranges comparable to ICBMs and SLBMs, there would be a hole in the agreement which could make meaningless the numerical constraints on ICBMs and SLBMs.

Nitze asked how this problem differed from the problem of mobile ICBMs. Shchukin said that the problem of mobile ICBMs would have to be considered at the same time that we consider airborne long range ballistic missiles. He said he had noted that we had not brought up the subject of mobile ICBMs. Brown said we were concentrating upon the three main elements in our proposed approach.

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Brown then questioned Shchukin on their reasons for proposing a ban on long range cruise missiles. Shchukin said that to be frank, cruise missiles presented a greater problem to the defense than did ICBMs and SLBMs. They could fly low, they could maneuver, and they presented a very small radar cross-section. The problem of defending against ICBMs and SLBMs was, in principle, soluble. An RV, which might have a small radar cross-section outside the atmosphere, bloomed when it entered the atmosphere because of ionization of the atmosphere. This was not true of cruise missiles. It would be enormously expensive to develop defenses against cruise missiles.

He went on to point out that with manned bombers there was a certain attrition rate which would limit their usefulness even on one-time missions. This would be even more limiting in multiple non-nuclear missions. Cruise missiles, however, could be launched in large numbers and the attrition factor was not pertinent. Nitze pointed out that in the ABM Treaty we had limited ABM defenses in order to assure the penetration of missiles. From our standpoint it was equally important to assure the penetration capability of bombers which were less destabilizing in their potential than ballistic missiles. Shchukin said that it was essential from their standpoint to have defenses against bombers and bomber-armaments of third countries. It was possible that they could be attacked by such bombers using conventional weapons. These attacks obviously would be against population centers, not against silos.

Brown said that the situation could then be summarized as follows: The USSR considers that it needs defenses against the threat of bombers from countries presumed to have lesser technological capability than the major powers, but the U.S. considers it necessary to be in a position with its higher technology to penetrate those defenses.

Shchukin said that he was merely raising the considerations which were in their minds so that we would be in a better position to discuss these matters in the follow-on talks. He went on to say that in those talks, we must also be prepared to discuss the

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matter of MIRVs. He noted that Brown, in his intervention at the mini-plenary, had turned his own question back upon himself. He said that as he saw it, there were three possibilities with respect to MIRVs. One possibility was that both sides be free to do whatever they wish with respect to MIRVs. The second possibility was that neither side have any MIRVs at all. The third possibility was some middle ground, which he favored.

Brown noted the difficulties of verification without inspection and perhaps even with inspection; we had also discussed flight test controls. Shchukin said, nevertheless, the MIRV issue should be discussed. He said that he did not believe it was within the realm of reality to expect people to destroy what they already have; therefore, he thought the most obvious field of exploration was what he had suggested as being the third possibility. In such an exploration it would be necessary to consider the various characteristics of MIRVs.

Nitze asked whether Shchukin had any specific thoughts on what could be done under the third possibility. Shchukin said he did have such thoughts and had advanced them in Moscow, but was not authorized to discuss them here.

Nitze said he had a question with regard to Shchukin's suggestion that it was not, in general, possible to expect the sides to destroy what they already had. Would it not be possible over, say, a ten year period mutually to phase out certain existing weapon systems? Over time, what now looked new and attractive might not appear as much so.

Shchukin said the problem here was the third country problem and not just NATO. Nitze said that that problem existed for the United States as well. Shchukin said it looked somewhat different from the perspective of Moscow. Nitze said he had given some thought to the problem, not just from the viewpoint of Washington, but also in imagining he was looking at it from Moscow. Shchukin said he would not advise doing that; it only gives one a headache.

PHN

SALDEL:PHNitze:HBrown:ar:mb
Geneva, December 15, 1972

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